

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MANILA 05292 241214Z

43

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01

SP-02 AID-05 L-02 OMB-01 /058 W

----- 027069

R 240926Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2610

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

US MISSION GENEVA 306

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 5292

E O 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, RP

SUBJ: LABOR UNIFICATION TALKS HIT SNAGS

REF: MANILA 4440

BEGIN SUMMARY: MAVERICK TRADE UNIONIST JOHNNIE TAN IS OBJECTING TO WHAT HE CONSIDERS UNDEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES IN DESIGNATION LEADERSHIP FOR PROPOSED NTUC. IN HIS ABSENCE, LABOR WORKING GROUP HAD COME UP WITH "CONSENSUS" LIST OF NTUC OFFICERS INCLUDING ROBERTO OCA AS PRESIDENT AND DEMOCRITO MENDOZA AS SECRETARY GENERAL. EMBASSY BELIEVES ODDS STILL FAVOR LABOR UNIFICATION ANNOUNCEMENT ON MAY 1 LABOR DAY, POSSIBLY AFTER SOME TYPE ACCOMMODATION WITH TAN. END SUMMARY.

1. SELECT WORKING GROUP OF TOP LABOR LEADERS, PUSHING TO COMPLETE FORMATION UNIFIED UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION BY MAY 1 LABOR DAY DEADLINE, HAS RUN INTO SNAGS. MAVERICK TRADE UNIONIST JOHNNIE TAN (FFW PRESIDENT) IS OBJECTING STRENUOUSLY TO WHAT HE CONSIDERS AUTHORITARIAN AND CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 MANILA 05292 241214Z

UNDEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES BEING CONDONED BY HIS LABOR

COLLEAGUES. SPECIFICALLY, HE OPPOSES DESIGNATION OF PROPOSED NATIONAL TRADE UNION CENTER (NTUC) LEADERSHIP BY APPOINTMENT (REFTEL), AS CURRENTLY ENVISAGED. AS ALTERNATIVE, HE HAS PROPOSED IDEA OF NTUC COORDINATING COUNCIL UNDER ROTATING CHAIRMANSHIP TO OVERSEE UNIFICATION EFFORTS UNTIL FULL-FLEDGED FOUNDING CONVENTION CAN BE ASSEMBLED TO APPROVE CONSTITUTION AND ELECT OFFICERS.

2. LABOR WORKING GROUP HAD EARLIER (APRIL 18) - IN ABSENCE TAN - COME UP WITH "CONSENSUS" LIST OF PROPOSED OFFICERS DESIGNATING ROBERTO OCA, DEMOCRITO MENDOZA AND BONIFACION TUPAZ AS PRESIDENT, SECRETARY GENERAL AND TREASURER RESPECTIVELY. IN ADDITION, 12 VICE PRESIDENTS (INCLUDING TAN) WERE NAMED. TAN, WITH SOME VALIDITY, IS MAKING POINT THAT EVEN THOUGH DESIGNATION NTUC OFFICERS ONLY "TEMPORARY" PENDING FORMAL CONVENTION, INCUMBENTS IN MEANTIME COULD TAKE UNFAIR ADVANTAGE (RAIDING, SOLICITING INDEPENDENT WORKERS, ETC.) OF THEIR STRATEGIC POSITIONS. LABOR SECRETARY BLAS OPLE, WHO WAS UNEXPECTEDLY DRAFTED TO ACCOMPANY MRS. MARCOS TO INDONESIA LAST WEEK-END, IS RETURNING APRIL 24 AND WILL MEET WITH LABOR WORKING GROUP APRIL 25 IN EFFORT RESOLVE NTUC HASSLE.

3. COMMENT: AKTHIS LATE DATE, DIFFICULT PREDICT WHETHER TAN'S COLLEAGUES IN LABOR WORKING GROUP WILL GO ALONG WITH ROTATING CHAIRMANSHIP CONCEPT. TAN TOLD LABATT HE INCLINED KEEP FFW OUT OF PROPOSED NTUC UNLESS MORE DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES FOLLOWED. HE REALIZES HE IS BUCKING "WILL OF DEPARTMENT OF LABOR" BY CAUSING UNIFICATION DIFFICILTIES ON EVE LABOR DAY. AS HE EXPRESSED IT, HOWEVER, AN NTUC "KANGAROO LABOR CENTER" RAMMED THROUGH BY DOL JUST TO MEET MAY 1 DEADLINE WOULD HARDLY BE IN BEST INTEREST OF FILIPINO WORKERS. EMBASSY BELIEVES ODDS STILL FAVOR UNIFICATION ANNOUNCEMENT ON LABOR DAY, POSSIBLY AFTER SOME TYPE ACCOMMODATION WITH JOHNNIE TAN.  
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